

Richmond's Future: A STEM Initiative in the Making

Presentation to the Higher Education Advisory
Committee

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Richmond's Future

- A regional think tank started in 2010 by Dr. Gene Trani, former president of VCU
- Initially supported by pledges of 3-4 year contributions by major private sector companies, local foundations, colleges and universities and individuals.
- Focused on the key drivers of long-term regional success (with an expansive view of the “region.”
- www.Richmondsfuture.org

Projects and Initiatives

- Initial projects were regional assessments
 - Dr. Ann Macheras of the Richmond Federal Reserve compared the region's major economic indicators to 10 similarly sized peer regions.
 - Dr. Michela Zonta of VCU compared the region's demographically to the same 10 similarly sized peers.
- Planned initiatives will include a focus on :
 - Logistics
 - Advanced manufacturing
 - STEM education and workforce development
 - Capitalizing on the region's locational assets and arts/cultural institutions.
 - Utilizing non/profit and philanthropic assets most effectively for the benefit of all citizens.

STEM Initiative

- STEM is clearly one of the region's long-term challenges
- Has also been identified by Governor McDonnell's Commission on Higher Education Reform, Innovation and Investment as one of the key challenges facing the Commonwealth
- Richmond's Future intends to catalyze a regional, public-private STEM Partnership that will bring together the business community, leading scientists, and educational leaders at all levels to develop a coordinated strategy for meeting the STEM challenge and positioning the region to be globally competitive.

STEM Initiative: The Next 6 Months

- Outreach- Richmond's Future will reach out to leaders in the private sector, in scientific endeavors, and in the educational community to participate in the regional STEM Task Force.
- Best and Next Practices- Richmond's Future will gather information about best and emerging practices in forming regionally-based STEM initiatives that can be tailored to the particular needs of our area.
- Convening a major statewide conference- Richmond's Future will explore with Secretary Fornash the possibility of partnering on a major statewide conference that will focus on:
 - National and global “best practices” in expanding the STEM pipeline, in establishing workforce development programs, and increasing degree attainment
 - Developing a practical map that regions can follow to take action.